

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 07026 212112Z

17

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SAJ-01 NASA-01

OES-03 NSF-01 EB-07 IO-10 /074 W

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R 211407Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 395

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

USMISSION USBERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

USIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 7026

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PINT, UR

SUBJECT: KELDYSH STEPS DOWN FROM ACADEMY OF SCIENCES: ELECTIONS
OF NEW PRESIDUM POSTPONED TILL NOVEMBER

DEPARTMENT PASS NASA

1. CPSU SECRETARY M.A. SOSLOV ANNOUNCED AT MAY 19 GENERAL
MEETING OF ACADEMY OF SCIENCES USSR (AN) THAT BECAUSE M.V. KELDYSH
HAD REPEATEDLY REQUESTED FROM CENTRAL COMMITTEE CPSU THAT HE NOT
BE RE-ELECTED PRESIDENT OF AN ON GROUNDS OF POOR HEALTH, CC CPSU
HAS RELUCTANTLY GRANTED HIS REQUEST. KELDYSH WILL, HOWEVER,
CONTINUE TO HOLD PRESIDENCY OF LENIN AND STATE PRIZE COMMITTEES
FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, DIRECTORSHIP OF INSTITUTE OF APPLIED
MATHEMATICS, AND WILL REMAIN ON PRESIDUM AN AS A MEMBER.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 MOSCOW 07026 212112Z

2. SUSLOV ALSO SAID THAT MANDATE OF PRESENT PRESIDUM AN WILL BE EXTENDED THROUGH NOVEMBER 1975 TO ENSURE CONTINUITY THROUGH OCTOBER 1975 JUBILEE FOR 250TH ANNIVERSARY OF AN. VICE PRESIDENT V.A. KOTEL'NIKOV WILL CONTINUE AS ACTING PRESIDENT THROUGH NOVEMBER. GENERAL MEETING OF AN DUTIFULLY PASSED APPROPRIATE RESOLUTIONS. WEARING HIS HAT AS AN ACADEMICIAN, CPSU SECRETARY B.N. PONOMAREV THEN LECTURED ON SIGNIFICANCE OF WW II.

3. COMMENT: KELDYSH DID NOT ATTEND THE GENERAL MEETING AND IS PRESENTLY HOSPITALIZED AFTER A SUDDEN DETERIORATION IN HIS PHYSICAL CONDITION. THIS WAS TOLD TO NASA DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR GEORGE LOW AT PLANESIDE ON MAY 17 BY ACADEMICIAN BORIS PETROV, LOW'S COUNTERPART, ON A CONFIDENTIAL BASIS.

4. EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT SOVIETS HAD PLANNED TO KEEP SAME PRESIDUM ON DUTY THROUGH 250TH JUBILEE WITH KELDYSH AS TITULAR PRESIDENT, AND THAT KELDYSH'S SUDDEN RELAPSE HAS FORCED THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF KOTEL'NIKOV AS ACTING PRESIDENT. DECISION TO EXTEND MANDATE OF PRESIDUM FROM MAY THROUGH NOVEMBER PERMITS REGIME TO POSTPONE DIFFICULT PROBLEMS IN DECIDING WHO WILL FILL NUMEROUS VACANCIES IN SCIENTIFIC LEADERSHIP. THESE IMPORTANT POSTS ALSO INVOLVE STATUS ON CPSU CENTRAL COMMITTEE, AND BY NOVEMBER POLITICAL CURRENTS SHOULD BE CLEAR ENOUGH TO PERMIT CHOICES AMONG CONTENDERS.

5. ONE STRIKING FACT ABOUT GENERAL MEETING IS THE CASTING ASIDE OF THE FIG LEAF OF SCIENTIFIC AUTONOMY. KEY PROBLEMS ARE REFERRED TO THE POLITBURO FOR DECISION AS SOSLOV MADE CLEAR IN HIS SPEECH. PONOMAREV'S LECTURE ON THE TRIPMPH OF SOCIALSIM OVER FASCISM IN WWII FURTHER EMPHASIZED POLITICAL NATURE OF GENERAL MEETING. AGENDA OF THE GENERAL MEETING WAS TO HAVE BEEN THE ELECTION OF A NEW PRESIDENT AND PRESIDUM FOR REGULAR FOUR-YEAR TERM, BUT ASPIRANTS FOR VACANCIES NOW HAV FIVE MORE MONTHS TO MANEUVER.

6. THE SURFACING OF PARTY INFLUENCE IN AN IS NOT UNEXPECTED ALTHOUGH ITS BLATANCY HAS STRUCK MOSOCW OBSERVERS. OVER THE LAST DECADE YOUNG CAPABLE SCIENTISTS WHO ARE ALSO LOYAL PARTY MEMBERS HAVE BECOME ACADEMICIANS. THIS IS A BASIC CHANGE FROM PREVIOUS SITUATION WHEN UNDISTINGUISHED HACKS MADE UP THE PARTY GROUP IN THE AN. SUCH PEOPLE MAY BE MORE DIFFICULT TO CONTROL AND THIS CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 MOSCOW 07026 212112Z

MAY ALSO BE FACTOR IN LEADERSHIP VACILLATION IN THIS REGARD.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: HEALTH, MEMBERSHIP, COMMITTEES, SCIENTISTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ellisoob
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975MOSCOW07026
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750179-0500
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750532/aaaabcec.tel
Line Count: 110
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ellisoob
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <02 MAY 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <24 SEP 2003 by ellisoob>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: KELDYSH STEPS DOWN FROM ACADEMY OF SCIENCES: ELECTIONS OF NEW PRESIDUM POSTPONED TILL NOVEMBER
TAGS: PINT, UR, CPSU, (KELDYSH, M V)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006